Rail link for Agartala

2622. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to link Tripura capital of Agartala, by rail with other parts of the country, by the year 2006; and

(b) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) and (b) The work of new line from Kumarghat to Agartala (109 km.) is in progress, which on completion will provide rail connectivity to Agartala. Kumarghat-Manu (21 km.) is targeted for completion during 2002-2003. No target date for the whole project has yet been fixed. The line would be completed in the coming years as per availability of resources.

Raid on catering department at New Delhi Railway Station

†2623. DR. A.K. PATEL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Railway Vigilance Department had raided the catering department at New Delhi Railway Station on 4th January and 5th March, 2002, and seized spurious and substandard food items;

(b) whether the Chief Railway Vigilance Officer had submitted his report five months back, yet no action has been taken so far by the department thereon;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the reasons for not taking any action and by when the action thereon is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) Preventive checks were conducted by the Railway Vigilance at the catering unit of New Delhi Railway Station on 04.01.2002 and 11.03.2002 (not on 05.03.2002). No catering material was seized by the Vigilance team nor any spurious or sub-standard material found during these checks.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) No, Sir. Certain irregularities were detected during the checks for which disciplinary action has been instituted against the four officials found responsible by the Vigilance Department. In addition, trolleys/stalls of eleven vendors found indulging in parrallel sales have been closed for three months.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

Demolition of building near Kollam Railway Station

2624. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to demolish the Chineese Palace building located near Kollam Railway Station in Kerala;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Kerala Government has requested to hand over the same, for providing Art-Gallery;

(d) whether Government are aware that the Chineese Palace is an old and ancient building and is a living monument of Chineese Architecture in Kerala;

(e) whether Government would consider it renovate, preserve and retain the building as such or handover to the State Government for preservation; and

(f) the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir. However, Kollam Corporation has requested the Railway to hand over the building to them, which was not agreed to.

(d) to (f) No heritage value can be attributed to this building as lot of additions and alterations have already been done for the purpose of Railway use. There is no plan to renovate the building. Also, there is no proposal to hand-over the building to Kerala Government. The space around the building may be required for Railway's future developments.